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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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WO 00/42125 PCT/US00/00981

TWO STAGE PROCESS FOR HYDRODESULFURIZING DISTILLATES USING BULK MULTIMETALLIC CATALYST

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CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a continuation-in-part of USSN 09/231,156 filed on January 15, 1999, which is a continuation-in-part of USSN 08/900,389 which was filed on July 15, 1997.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a two stage hydrodesulfurizing process for producing low sulfur distillates. A distillate boiling range feedstock containing in excess of about 3,000 wppm sulfur is hydrodesulfurized in a first hydrodesulfurizing stage containing one or more reaction zones in the presence of hydrogen and a hydrodesulfurizing catalyst. The liquid product stream thereof is passed to a first separation stage wherein a vapor phase product stream and a liquid product stream are produced. The liquid product stream, which has a substantially lower sulfur and nitrogen content then the original feedstream is passed to a second hydrodesulfurizing stage also containing one or more reaction zones where it is reacted in the presence of hydrogen and a second hydrodesulfurizing catalyst at hydrodesulfurizing conditions. The catalyst in any one or more reaction zones is a bulk multimetallic catalyst comprised of at least one Group VIII non-noble metal and at least two GroupVIB metals wherein the ratio of Group VIB metal to Group VIII non-noble metals is about 10:1 to 1:10.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Environmental and regulatory initiatives are requiring ever lower levels of both sulfur and aromatics in distillate fuels. For example, proposed sulfur limits for distillate fuels to be marketed in the European Union for the year 2005 is 50

Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and the inventions require a different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Art Unit: 2168

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Greta L. Robinson whose telephone number is (571)272-4118. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim T. Vo can be reached on (571)272-3642. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Greta Robinson Primary Examiner June 2, 2006